The Honorable James M. Eagen III
Chief Administrative Officer
June 9, 2005

Statement before the Committee on House Administration

Chairman Ney, Ranking Member Millender-McDonald and Members of the Committee, I appreciate having this opportunity to appear before you to discuss the events of May 11, 2005.

As part of this joint effort today, I will be focusing on the current roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer as they relate to emergency communications and notifications for the House Community. In addition, I will provide an overview of the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BC/DR) Program.

During the early afternoon of May 11, 2005 the United States Capitol Police (USCP) initiated an evacuation of the Capitol Complex, when the level of AIRCON Red was reached. All House and Senate Office Buildings, as well as the Capitol Building, were evacuated.

Shortly after, at approximately 12:04 pm, the CAO's Emergency Communications Center (ECC) was notified of the AIRCON Red situation, and assisted per established procedures, in relaying secondary notification messages through email, blackberry, and cellular text messages to quickly get the word out across the House campus. The ECC sent out the first secondary notification at 12:06 pm, and then evacuated the Ford House Office Building and established a remote location to continue their operation.

The ECC remained in contact with the USCP command center until the situation was cleared around 12:42 pm, when the all clear message was communicated to Members, staff and visitors.

In addition to the ECC capabilities, the CAO was able to safely and effectively evacuate the House Child Care Center, while keeping the parents informed as to the status of their children.

I would like to commend the efforts of the Emergency Communications Center and the Child Care Center team, who acted and performed to the best of their abilities during this event.

As stated earlier, I will now provide a summary of CAO's Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Program.

The events of 9/11 and the subsequent October 2001 anthrax event prompted an examination of the House's capabilities to respond to such events. Through this analysis several key gap areas were identified that required improvements. These areas were:

- **Communications** – improvements in capabilities to provide information to Members and Staff during and after an event as well as capabilities to ensure Members and Staff can continue to communicate if dislocated
- **Continuity of Operations** – establishment of facilities and supporting plans and processes to ensure that the House can continue to perform Legislative business under a variety of scenarios where normal capabilities are disrupted
- **Technology Capabilities** – improvements in the redundancy and hardening of technology capabilities such that single points of failure are mitigated and failover capabilities are in place
- **Secure Mail** – A study was conducted to consider cost savings that might come from converging paper mail and digital mail operations. The study points to a potential for $2,000,000 in savings and the vendor proposals to support convergence are currently under review.
- **Digital Mail** – pursue concepts and technologies of digitizing First Class letters and flats to reduce vulnerabilities to the House and associated facilities when processing mail

The CAO-established BC/DR Program is comprised of approximately 20 specific projects to address these gap areas.

Example efforts include:

Communications

- "Anytime, Anywhere" communications in-depth strategy. This includes:
  - 24 hour a day/7 day a week Emergency Communications Center
  - House Alert Capability that can provide notifications to email, blackberry devices (as of 4/2005 – 5000 devices in use in House) and cell phones
  - House Floor Pager notifications
  - Dialogic Voice Notification capability
  - Distribution of Government Emergency Telephone System (GETS) cards to all Members
- Remote Access Capabilities – supporting Member and Staff access to the House's data network if displaced to District Offices or home. Currently supports 350 dial-in and 5000 broadband (DSL or cable modem) simultaneous connections.

Continuity of Operations

- Establishment of the House Emergency Operations Plan with a designated emergency management structure and clear disaster recovery support processes. Includes establishment of emergency coordination facilities and

support from the Office of Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Operations and House Recovery Operations (HRO) Teams

- Development of extensive written procedures to support disaster recovery that are regularly verified and tested through coordinated House-wide exercises

Technology

- Alternate Computing Facility (ACF)
  - Established Alternate Computing Facility (ACF) which is a "warm" failover site for the House's Ford Data Center
  - ACF includes redundant systems for email, web sites, Legislative Systems and other House-wide services as well as capabilities to support Member, Committee and institutional support offices
- Voice and Data Communications
  - Added redundancy for on-campus data and voice networks to ensure no single points of failure
  - Added capabilities to re-route campus voice services and District Office data network services
- Mobile Broadcast Communications
  - To provide the House Recording Studio the ability to broadcast coverage of House proceedings during any emergency from a fully equipped broadcast truck with satellite uplink capability
- Mobile Communications
  - To provide off-site/mobile communications deployment (emergency and non-emergency) and assured communications capabilities for House Members and key staffers. We have two vehicles, each of which can support 500 phones and 500 laptop computers.

Secure/Digital Mail

- Secure mail included the re-location and reinvention from an on-campus, limited mail security approach, to an off-campus, broad-based security capability that guards against threats against the Washington, D.C. House campus. The House has recently contracted with Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab to re-construct the off-site facility to obtain efficiencies and improve processes.
- Digital mail, pilot phase I was initiated in 2002, and pilot phase II followed in 2004; a total of 30 offices participated. The pilot is currently holding at the phase II state, pending the award of the convergence contract. Once the contract is awarded, the next phase is for a total of 75 participating offices.

Overall, the CAO BC/DR Program is a broad approach to enhance the operational resilience of the House's critical business functions, under any and all conditions, regardless of the environment.

At this time, I am pleased to respond to answer any questions you may have.